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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRUSSELS 000409

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [DPKO](#) [EUN](#) [USEU](#) [BRUSSELS](#)

SUBJECT: EU ON AMIS REHATting: BRUSSELS DONOR CONFERENCE?

REF: (A) USUN NEW YORK 0192

Classified By: PRMOFF MARC J. MEZNAR. REASONS 1.4(B) AND (D).

11. (C) Summary. The EU agrees that AMIS rehatting to a UN peacekeeping operation should happen as soon as possible. Because of funding constraints, both the AU and the UN need to make important decisions this month. The UN has urged the Commission to host a donor conference in Brussels. While a February 20 timeframe would be ideal for expediting the transition, the EU believes a full-fledged donor conference cannot happen until the AU has formally requested the UN to take over its peacekeeping mission in Darfur and the UN has taken concrete steps to fulfill such a request. Specifically, the UN needs to formulate a precise transition plan with timetables and logistical details before donors can decide on funding options. The Commission might reprogram 50 million euros in development funds to support AMIS during the transition. However, African countries must agree to this, and some may favor other priorities. Additional Commission funds could not come online before June, meaning other donors would have to fill the AMIS funding gap from April through June. End Summary.

EU Position on Rehatting

12. (C) At the January 10 meeting of the PSC, the EU agreed to engage the AU and urge it to request rehatting as soon as possible. The PSC stressed that rehatting should: 1) portray AMIS as a success; and 2) incorporate AMIS troops into the new UN operation. According to Council Secretariat Sudan policy officer Christian Manahl, neither the AU nor the UN has a big surplus of peacekeeping troops, making the second point important practically as well as politically.

Donor Conference

13. (C) Both Manahl and DG Development Head of Unit for East Africa Roger Moore characterized the report of a February 20 donor conference in Brussels as a "rumor" (without completely discounting the possibility that Commissioner Michel may have supported such a meeting during discussions with UN officials). They said that before a full-fledged donor conference could take place, two things should happen: 1) the AU should make a formal request to the UN for rehatting; and, 2) UN DPKO should present a strategy for transition, along with specific details about its peacekeeping plans for Darfur.

14. (C) Both EU interlocutors insisted that key decisions must be made this month by both the AU and UN to ensure a smooth transition. Manahl said the AU cannot wait until the ministerial meeting in the second half of March to make a formal request to the UN for rehatting because this would leave insufficient time for donors to consider the financial needs and identify funds.

15. (C) This rationale is probably behind the February 20 date. Moore reported that the UN has "bombarded" Commission officials with calls urging them to host a donor conference in Brussels, but that no final decision had been made by the Commission. He said a Brussels conference remains "a possibility" although the issue of a date is tricky. Ideally, a full-fledged donor conference would take place soon after the AU makes its request to the UN and well before the AMIS funding and mandate runs out at the end of March.

16. (C) According to High Representative Javier Solana's ESDP Counselor, Matthew Reece, his office prefers the first week of March as this will ensure at least four weeks interval prior to the end of existing funding arrangements. Given travel schedules, March 7 in Paris or March 8 in Brussels were mentioned as possible dates. He said that for this conference to be successful, high-level contacts with Annan and Konare will be necessary to get an AU decision prior to the conference to hand the mission to the UN.

EU Thinking on Darfur peacekeeping

17. (C) Manahl said that the EU was hopeful that the arrival

of a new Nigerian force commander would improve the current AMIS mission. EU Special Representative Pekka Haavisto was scheduled to meet the new force commander in Darfur on February 4. However, he said the AMIS force continues to suffer from the lack of an Addis-based strategic director. Undoubtedly, this would change for the better after rehatting.

18. (C) Manahl said that UN DPKO has not been in a rush to move into Darfur or to present a timeline for transition. In a meeting with Haavisto in Khartoum last week, Jan Pronk discussed his own "elaborate" plans for the new UN force (which Pronk thought should number from 12,000 - 20,000).

19. (C) According to Reece, a key question for all players on planning the transition is what can the UN begin to provide in the run-up to taking control in October? In other words, can the UN gradually take overall control of aspects of the mission? For example, the UN has agreements with Sudan for the mission in the South. Some of those could be extended early to cover Darfur thereby taking some pressure off the donor community. Manahl made similar points about using extending the UN operation from the South to Darfur.

Funding

10. (C) Both Moore and Manahl expressed concern about AMIS funding when the operation runs out of cash in early April. For months, the Commission has been considering reprogramming 50 million euros from development accounts to the Africa Peace Facility in order to support AMIS. Moore said for this to happen African countries would need to agree to give up development projects in order to support AMIS. Although some money would come from expiring development funds that have not been used, other money would need to come from projects that the Commission and African countries have already agreed to. Moore said he was personally skeptical about putting more development money into AMIS since there was no clear picture at this point regarding the future of the operation. "We keeping adding segments to this bridge that leads nowhere," he told PRMOff.

11. (C) If decisions are made in favor of reprogramming additional development money to AMIS, the earliest it can become available is June. Both interlocutors wondered whether the U.S. was prepared to plug the April-June funding gap.

Next steps

12. (C) According to Reece, the following sequential steps would enable the EU to support a donors conference and increase the likelihood of further transitional funding:

- AU decision to hand the mission to the UN;
- UNSC decision (UNSCR or Presidency statement) to take on the mission, which along with allocation of UN resources to its staff to commence planning provides confidence to donors that the final stretch of the AMIS mission has begun. Reece stressed that this action "punches the clock" for a 6-9 month countdown to UN control;
- EU Council goes to Commission and to Member States with clarity on how much money is needed and for how long with assurances that this is the last tranche of EU funding for AMIS;
- The Africa Peace Facility could then predict the end of this aspect of its funding increasing the likelihood that the issued discussed above could be managed.

13. (C) Reece summarized further steps urging that the political process needs "kick started" in the face of a deteriorating situation on the ground. He concluded that "cutting up the cake" among the participants by forcing concessions from the Sudanese government and the rebel groups is seen within Solana's office as the most likely solution. This will require both carrots and sticks in the hands of senior people according to Reece.

Comment

14. (C) EU concerns about timing and funding with regard to rehatting closely match those of the U.S. (ref A). Coordinated messages from the international community, particularly from the U.S. and EU, may help both the AU and UN make necessary decisions sooner rather than later.

